

NSC BRIEFING

20 October 1955

ADD MIDDLE EAST - ARAB PACT REVIVED?

- I. Late press reports from Cairo and other Arab capitals state that Egypt and Syria signed a military aid agreement on 20 October.
- A. Agreement reportedly calls for unified command and mutual aid in event of an Israeli attack.
- B. One press report alleges that a similar military agreement will be concluded between Syria and Lebanon.
- II. The Egypt-Syria agreement revives, in a new form, the proposed Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi pact -- which Cairo sought in vain last spring, in reaction to Iraq's adherence to the "Northern Tier".
- A. Egypt's ability to get such an agreement at this time is attributable to the boost given Egypt's prestige by its Bloc arms deal.
1. The agreement could very well provide a channel by which Bloc arms could reach Syria.

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III. Iraq's reaction is likely to be strong.

- A. Iraqis will probably do their utmost to subvert the Egyptian-Syrian agreement and render it ineffective.
- B. Nuri will probably again ask the US and UK for a "free hand" to deal with the "Syrian problem."
- C. The Israelis will also see the move as confirmation of their belief that Egypt intends to destroy Israel.

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